

Encourages Iowans to Honor Veterans by Participating in Veterans History Project

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, DC - To honor our veterans and raise awareness of a Library of Congress program, Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) interviewed Jacob Krapfl, an Iraq War Veteran in Dubuque today. Braley will submit the interview to the Library of Congress' "Veterans History Project," which preserves, collects and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war.

Krapfl, of New Vienna, Iowa, served two tours of duty in Iraq between September 2003 and March 2005. After returning home in 2007, Krapfl developed very serious Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms and nearly committed suicide. Fortunately, Krapfl's family and VA mental health professionals were able to help him get the treatment he needed to start recovering. Since then Krapfl wrote a novel, *Shadows of War*, that is based on his experience as a soldier and a veteran returning home.

"To truly honor our veterans, we need to do a better job of understanding what they experienced while serving out country in uniform," Braley said. "When my father was just 17, he enlisted in the Marines and fought in the historic battle of Iwo Jima. In our family, we've always had great pride for my father's service and the courage he exhibited on the beaches of Iwo Jima. My father died before I had a chance to learn the true extent of his

story. My hope is that people across Iowa will take the time to participate in this project and learn the stories of their family, friends and neighbors who served our country so bravely.”

The Veterans History Project collects and preserves the remembrances of American war veterans and civilian workers who supported them. The Project collects remembrances of veterans who served in World War I, World War II, the Cold War, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), or Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present). Iowans interested in participating in the Veterans History Project should visit www.loc.gov/vets.

Braley has been a leader in Congress in working to improve care for our veterans. Last week, he voted for a series of bills that will expand health care for veterans, including a requirement to provide chiropractic care at all Veterans Affairs medical centers. Other legislation would provide service dog training therapy and increase reimbursements for health care professionals employed by the VA.

In April, Braley championed a key provision in the *Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act* to include Veterans Administration facilities in the National Health Service Corps. That bill, which was signed into law by President Obama earlier this month, also provides support for family members who care for disabled veterans, enhances health services for 1.8 million women veterans, expands mental health services and access to care in rural areas and relieves financial burdens for veterans who are catastrophically disabled.

For nearly two years, Braley led efforts to ensure that thousands of troops nationwide receive proper compensation known as "Respite Leave." Because of Braley's efforts, hundreds of troops in Iowa and thousands nationwide started receiving their checks this spring. Braley's *Guaranteed Benefits for Our Troops Act* (HR 1222) was signed into law in October 2009 as part of the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act and enabled the Pentagon to release the promised benefits.